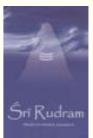
Śrī Rudram Anuvāka 02

namo rudrāyātatāvīne ksetrāaņām pataye namah 11711

namaḥ – salutation; rudrāya – to the one who liquidatess the sorrow of samsāra; ātatāvine – who protects with a bow that is ready for use; kṣetrāṇām – of all bodies; pataye – to the Lord; namaḥ – salutation.

Salutation to the one who liquidates the sorrow of samsārā , who protects with a bow that is ready for use and who is the Lord of all bodies.



Rudraya namah – Salutations to Lord Rudra. Earlier in this text, the word

rudra was explained as rodayati, one who is the cause for tears. But here He is said to be one who removes it either relatively or totally. Rudra is the giver of karma phala for prayers and reaching out karma, giving relatively a break from sorrow. The removal of sorrow is total by being the svarūpa of oneself which is why the upaniṣad says ātmavit śokam tarati¹—the knower of the self crosses sorrow', meaning, He is pūrṇa ānanda, all happiness.

Ātatāvine² namaļ—Salutation to Him, who is ready to protect with his bow. There is a poetic work of Bhāgavata in Telugu written by Pothanna. Describing the Lord's response to Gajendra's call for help, he says, "Lord seated in vaikuṇṭha with Lakṣmī left the place without weapons, upper cloth, conch, disc and so on. He did not say a word to Lakṣmī but rushed towards his devotee to help him". It poetically presents the Lord's readiness to help. He is thus ātatāvī, ready to help his devotees. One has to only seek help and it will be given. The Lord has to come to one's rescue in time and he is ever present as grace to be tapped.

Ātatāyine³ is another reading as even in Śukla Yajurveda. Even though an ātatayi is defined⁴ as one to be given capital punishment, here the word refers to Rudra meaning 'the one who goes with a bow which is ready set with arrow for striking... 'Unto Him my salutation.

He is the kṣetrāṇām patiḥ, the Lord of the kṣetrās, bodies and everything else one can objectify. This body is kṣetra, the field where you reap the harvest of karma phala. In fact, it is dharma kṣetra, puṇya kṣetra, a combination of peculiar puṇya and pāpa making this human body qualified for gaining mokṣa. One who knows this body and its nature as such as kṣetrajña.

Ksetra is also a place of pilgrimage outside of oneself. One has to reach a place of pilgrimage. Here, the distance is between knowledge and ignorance. In ksetrāṇām patiḥ, the word ksetra also includes a mosquito's body. The Lord is in an ant as well as in a devatā.

¹ Chāndogyopaniṣad 7|1|3

² The derivation of the word 'atatavi': ātata-jyena dhanuṣā avati rakṣati iti ātatāvi, one who protects with a bow set with an arrow.

³ Rudrāyātatāyine (śukla yajurveda). The derivation of the word āt

atāyi ātatena vistreņa dhanusā saha eti gacchati iti ātatāyi udyatāyudhaḥ—one who goes with a bow ready (to send an arrow)

⁴ Agnido garadascaiva śastrapāņirdhanāpahaḥ kṣetradārāpaharatā ca ṣadete hyātatāyinaḥ. One who sets fire to the house, who poisons food, who attacks with weapons, robs another, usurps another's land and who abducts another's wife—these six are indeed (known) as ātatāyins.